



MEMORANDUM

City of Watertown Planning Office

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TO: Norman J. Wayte II, Chairman, Planning Board

FROM: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Site Plan Approval – 229 Massey Street North

DATE: December 2, 2010

Request: Site Plan Approval for the construction of an 1,800 square foot gas pump canopy addition and related grading and paving improvements at 229 Massey Street North, Parcel Numbers 7-06-119 and 7-06-120.

Applicant: Jennifer L. Howard of Stewart's Shops Corp.

Proposed Use: Convenience Store and Gas Station.

Property Owner: Stewart's Shops Corp.

Submitted:

Property Survey: Yes	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: Yes	Construction Time Schedule: No
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Yes	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: No

SEQRA: Unlisted Action	County Planning Board Review Required: Yes
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Zoning Information:

District: Commercial	Maximum Lot Coverage: None
Setback Requirements: None	Buffer Zone Required: No

Project Overview: The applicant is proposing the construction of an 1,800 square foot gas pump canopy, the installation of new underground gas tanks and the regrading and repaving of the entire asphalt area at the Stewart's Shop located at 229 Massey Street North. The applicant is also proposing the expansion of the asphalt area to accommodate the construction of the canopy. The expansion is into the green area in the front of the site which is currently City owned land. The applicant is in the process of purchasing this portion of the street margin from the City.

Parking: Based on the size of the building (3,347 square feet), 17 parking spaces are required. The plans show 18 spaces with an additional 6 spaces provided at the fuel dispensers, bringing the total proposed parking spaces to 24, which exceeds the requirement.

Grading, Drainage and Utilities: The Engineering Department has reviewed the plans and has the following comments:

1. Consider extending the proposed asphalt wing curb 25 ft \pm westward to CB #3. This would help direct runoff to the catch basin versus over the sidewalk and also provide a 2 ft \pm grass buffer strip between the sidewalk and parking lot.
2. Depict the existing sanitary lateral and size on the plans.

Lighting: The proposed lighting plan includes 3 pole mounted light fixtures. One pole mounted fixture is shown at each entrance and one is at the rear of the site near the dumpster. At the fuel dispenser area, a total of 12 recessed canopy lights are proposed. 5 wall mounted lights are shown on both sides and the rear of the building while 5 soffit lights are proposed on the front of the building. The lighting levels across the property line in the northwest area of the site where the two story residence is located should be reduced to no more than 0.5 foot-candles. The photometric plan shows lighting levels as high 0.8 – 1.5 foot-candles on the neighboring property.

Landscaping: As is noted above, the applicant is expanding the paved area into the green area in the front of the site which is currently City owned land. This expansion will necessitate the removal of two 4" Sugar Maple trees and three planting beds containing a variety of shrubs and perennials. As is shown on the landscaping plan, the three planting beds are proposed to be replaced; however, the plant materials proposed in the beds consist only of perennials.

The Planning Board's Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines recommend 15' wide landscaped strips adjacent to all street right-of-ways. Within the strip, one large maturing deciduous or evergreen shade tree should be planted every 40 linear feet. Where parking lots and driveways abut the landscaped strip, shrubs should be considered for screening in addition to the shade trees. The screening should be a plant species that grows to a minimum of three (3) feet high and extends along the entire street frontage of the parking lot, exclusive of driveways and visibility setbacks. A landscaped berm may also be utilized to screen the parking lot and driveways. The planting beds should therefore be expanded to run along the entire edge of the paved area exclusive of a 10' visibility setback from the driveway and should contain the three trees, shrubs and perennials in between the shade trees.

Interior parking lot trees and landscaping are recommended in addition to the required landscaped strip at a minimum average density of one shade tree for each fifteen parking spaces, meaning that 2 trees should be provided. It may be possible to change one or more of the parking spaces in front of or to the side of the building to a landscaped island, especially given the fact that the parking provided exceeds what is required by 7 spaces.

Constraints with the rest of the site including retaining walls on the south and west sides of the property and the fact that the building is remaining in place, limit what can be done with any additional landscaping such as perimeter landscaping that is typically recommended.

Signage: A separate sign permit will have to be obtained from the Bureau of Code Enforcement as the size and make up of the proposed signage for the project will not be approved as part of the site plan submission. Although the Planning Board does not review the composition of the signs, it can make a recommendation regarding the placement of the signs on the site. There is a pylon sign proposed for the northeast corner of the site. The site plan shows a detail of the sign which shows that there is 11' of clearance from the bottom of the sign to the ground. Visibility and line of sight issues should not be a concern given the proposed clearance and the fact that the driveway is 85' away from the sign.

Other Comments: The following comments have also been noted after review of the plans:

1. An installation detail for the route sign in the City margin that is to be relocated must be provided that shows breakaway posts specified.
2. The site currently consists of two parcels, plus a third will be purchased from the City. All three parcels of land should be combined by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the County Clerk.
3. Final approval for this application will be given by the City Council after a recommendation from the Planning Board.
4. Since the project is located within 500' of a Jefferson County office building, review by the Jefferson County Planning Board will be required. The County Planning Board will consider the application at their December 28th meeting.

Summary: The following lists several key issues that should be addressed:

1. The proposed asphalt wing curb in the front of the site should be extended 25 ft \pm westward to CB #3 to help direct runoff to the catch basin and to also provide a minimum 2' grass buffer strip between the sidewalk and parking lot.
2. The location and size of the existing sanitary lateral should be shown on the plans.
3. The lighting levels across the property line in the northwest area of the site where the two story residence is located should be reduced to no more than 0.5 foot-candles.
4. The landscaping plan should be modified to include 3 large maturing trees across the front of the property per the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.
5. The planting beds should be expanded to run along the entire edge of the paved area exclusive of a 10' visibility setback from the driveway and should contain shrubs and perennials per the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.
6. Consideration should be given to changing one or more of the parking spaces in front of or to the side of the building to a landscaped island with trees.
7. An installation detail for the route sign in the City margin that is to be relocated must be provided that shows breakaway posts specified.
8. All three parcels of land involved in the project should be combined by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the County Clerk.

cc: Planning Board Members
City Council Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Jennifer L. Howard, Stewart's Shops Corp.